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Shoreline

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For the Members of the Edward H. Nabb Research Center for Delmarva History and Culture at Salisbury University

The month of October is generally recognized as "Family History Month" in the United States. The Nabb Research Center will be hosting two events relating to family history on Saturday, October 19. A "Getting Started" workshop will be led by G. Ray Thompson, PhD, director and co-founder of the Nabb Research Center. This workshop, directed toward the beginning researcher, will be a quick overview of the basics of conducting family history research and of using the local resources available at the Nabb Center. The fee for the workshop, held in the Nabb Center's Reading Room from 9:30 a.m.-noon, is $20 for the general public or $15 for members of Nabb. Please call 410-543-6312 for reservations.

Benjamin Lankford family of Somerset County, MD (Benjamin Lankford Collection Nabb Research Center)

The second event, from 1-4 p.m. on October 19, is a combination workshop and lecture being held by M.K. Miles and Vaughn Baker, both avid local and family history researchers. Miles, creator of the online genealogy database *Miles Files*, will help us find, organize and understand local family connections. Audience participation in discussing these relationships is encouraged.

In addition, Baker will share his research that investigates alliances and networking among the earliest Chesapeake settlers. He will discuss the family connections among the Eastern Shore's earliest European traders and settlers, and also the Dutch settlement in Delaware. Baker's discussion is a continuation of the "Transatlantic Origins of Early Delmarva Settlers" lecture he presented in March at the Nabb Center, a recap of which is included in the following review by Barbara Welsh. This event is free and open to the public. Space is limited. Please call 410-543-6312 for reservations.

Transatlantic Origins of Early Delmarva Settlers

Review of a Lecture given March 13, 2013, at the Nabb Research Center by Vaughn Baker

by Barbara Welsh, J.D., M.Phil

Many histories of Jamestown and the Chesapeake Bay region suggest that the first settlers in the Middle Atlantic were considered the "dregs of society." Rather, Baker, through his exhaustive, multi-decade research in Europe and the United States, has determined that they were well-trained explorers, warriors and privateers. The experience and determination of these men put them front and center in the colonization effort of the Chesapeake area. "It was as if the Eastern Shore was the forward operating command post for colonization from Canada to the Caribbean," Baker said. In front of a packed audience at the Nabb Center, Baker revealed the connections and origins of many of these early settlers.

John Smith, Virginia, *1612*

British hegemony in the Atlantic was established by the defeat of the Spanish armada in 1588. The end of the drain on resources at the settling of the religious wars in Europe allowed well-trained military and seafaring men, and their financial backers, to turn their attention and efforts to the North American continent. There is little question that without these men – Smith, Savage, Argall, Gates and Dale – America might well be a very different place. Spain and France had footholds in the area and were already established in Central and South America and the West Indies. But, Baker pointed out, it was English adventurers who landed on and began to explore and exploit the shores of the Chesapeake Bay.

These men were recruited by and had the backing of the Virginia Company in their efforts. The Virginia Company was a London-based investment company. The investors knew of the wealth coming from the Americas to the Spanish king. They wanted to cash in on any precious metals in the Americas, but they also wanted to find the Northwest Passage to the Orient to obtain the spices thought to cure the plague. They were not going to ignore gold, silver or precious stones, which they expected to find. The Spanish had found plenty of both gold and silver in their colonies in South and Central America, but the Englishmen knew that to succeed they needed to explore an area not controlled by the Spanish.

These were well-trained military men with generations of

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Transatlantic Origins of Early Delmarva Settlers

experience. Some had fought in the English rebellions of the 16th century and were from Kent and Staffordshire in England and yeomen in the service of the Earl of Worcester and Henry Prince of Wales. They were ship's officers and military men, trained and experienced on the continent and in the low countries of Holland and Belgium, as well as England and Ireland. They were the obvious choices to man the western exploration. The Virginia Company sought them out and they, in turn, recruited their friends and relatives.

The Eastern Shore families of Cotton, Dale, Hamby, Gates, Argall, Savage, and many others will find their ancestors among these early adventurers. These men did not give up their soldiering when recruited, but rather combined exploring in the Americas, the Caribbean and the Atlantic Coast with helping put down rebellions in Ireland and reconnoitering with their compatriots in the low countries of Holland and Belgium. They sailed back and forth, using the trade winds and ocean currents in the circle route to the Caribbean, up the coast past Cuba to the Carolinas and Virginia, and back to England and Ireland.

These men were not sent to found and settle an agriculture-based colony; they had no women with them. Rather they were sent to exploit what resources they did find, to interfere with the Spanish shipments back to England, to find that northwest passage, and generally to find out the lay of the land and the possibilities for profit for the Virginia Company.

These men were rough and ready yeomen and buccaneers, and they were competitive and aggressive – traits which helped the colony survive. However, some colonists, the "gentlemen" who were part of the settlement, may have considered themselves "too good to work." These higher-born gentlemen fought with capable but lower-born colonists such as John Smith. Indeed, there were factions fighting with each other against the Native Americans, and with the backers in England to the point that the king eventually took over the colony. All the men varied in their ability to get along with each other and with the Native Americans.

The severe drought present in the early years strained colonists and American Indians alike. The recent discovery of the cannibalism of a young girl in Jamestown that took place around 1609, during the so-called "starving time," bears stark witness to the severe conditions the early colonists endured. But endure it they did, and it is Baker's argument that the background of the early founders contributed to the success not only of the Virginia Colony, but of England's hold on the entire Atlantic coast.

The Virginia Company sent Gates and Dale to help sort out the early failures in Jamestown. Sir Thomas Dale was made the "High Marshall of Virginia" and used the laws of the Netherlands, with which he was familiar, as a basis for the rules and regulations of the new settlement. Many ventures were begun; one that was especially successful was the planting of tobacco. Gates and Dale worked with Rolfe to start a tobacco crop. Rolfe had gotten seed from the Spanish to create a new strain of tobacco. Fights with the Native Americans resulted in treachery and murder in both directions, but the colony teetered on. Women were brought over beginning in 1608, and the first Africans (from Angola) arrived after the capture of a Portuguese slave ship. In 1619 the first representative legislative assembly in the "New World" began in the colony. Eventually, due to the fighting and factionalism among the settlers, the king took over from the Virginia Company.

Meanwhile, the French had discovered a profitable market for furs and they, as well as other adventurers, began a fur trade with the Native Americans. The French pitted Native American groups against each other and against explorers from other countries. In an effort to regularize this trade, Ensign Thomas Savage was commissioned on the staff of the Master of Ordnance at Jamestown, becoming one of the first professional factors or agents for the fur trade. In a move that later benefited trade negotiations between the Native Americans and the English, Robert Poole and Henry Spelman had been left as temporary hostages with the American Indians. This exposure to the Native American culture and language proved to be an asset in the negotiations.

At his talk at the Nabb Center, Baker mapped for his audience the travels and settlements these men made in the Chesapeake region and in the Caribbean, Ireland, the Netherlands and England. It became clear in this excellent and well-illustrated presentation that the training, experience, connections, resourcefulness and boldness of these men helped create the English colonies along the Atlantic which survived and grew, eventually leading to the creation of the United States of America.

Barbara Welsh is a Nabb Center volunteer and docent for our current exhibit.

Native Americans: First Contact on Lower Delmarva

By Erin McKibben

The stories of "cowboys and Indians" in the "Wild Wild West" are ones known by just about everyone. But, have you ever wondered about the history of the Native Americans on the Eastern Shore? Our current exhibit, "Native Americans: First Contact on Lower Delmarva, 1607-1700," helps the visitor understand that history. With a fantastic display of maps, artifacts, images and even a full-size replica of a dugout canoe, visitors walk through the exhibit and get a feeling for who the native inhabitants were and how life drastically changed with the introduction of European settlers.

From first contact to the end of an era, the exhibit unfolds in a topical and chronological way across the walls of the Nabb Gallery, taking viewers on a journey through the 17th century Eastern Shore. You will examine the housing, wildlife, foods, trade goods and the environment of lower Delmarva, and see how the 17th century European artists depicted the natives. Among the displays are authentic artifacts including well-preserved pottery, stone projectiles and shell and stone tools, all of which create a thoughtful visual and learning experience. You will be able to visualize their lifestyles and understand the inevitable changes that occurred.

Anyone curious about local Native American heritage will truly enjoy this exhibit. It provides the visitor with a thought-provoking experience and insight into this nearly-lost culture, and ends with examples of how the Chesapeake-area natives differed from plains and western American Indian tribes.

Erin McKibben, a communication arts major and a history minor student, is completing her practicum at the Nabb Center.

Mob Rule in Princess Anne: The Lynching of George Armwood

By Julie Messick

The last lynching to take place in the State of Maryland occurred 80 years ago in October 1933. The article below describes the events.

LYNCHED — George Armwood just before he was hanged and burned at Princess Anne, Md. The N.A.A.C.P. seeks the passage of a bill to punish lynchers.

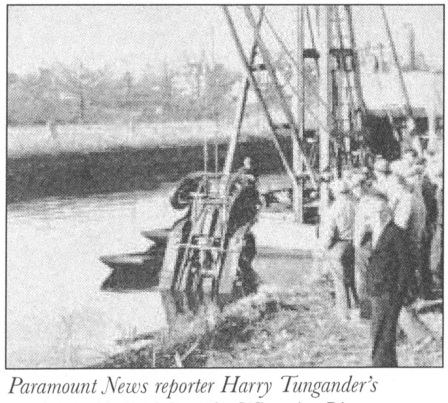
George Armwood after he was arrested. (Courtesy of the Maryland State Archives)

Tensions were high during the years 1931-1933 on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. During this time, two lynchings took place and another man was executed for the murder of a Worcester County family. In October 1931, Euel Lee was arrested for the murders of Green Davis, his wife Ivy, and their two daughters, Elizabeth and Mary. The local residents wanted to lynch him, but the Maryland State Police took him to Baltimore to be held for trial.

On December 4 that same year, another case of violence led to cries for a lynching. In Salisbury, Matthew Williams supposedly shot his employer Daniel Elliott and then turned the gun on himself. The local newspaper erroneously reported that Williams had died. Word soon spread that he was still alive and had been admitted to Peninsula General Hospital. A mob soon formed outside the hospital, and a group of men marched inside and threw Williams from the first-story window of the African-American ward to the crowd waiting below. The crowd dragged him to the lawn of the Wicomico County Courthouse and hung him in front of an estimated crowd of more than 1,000. After his lynching, the people of Salisbury quickly turned the blame onto residents of other Lower Shore counties. They cited their frustration over the lack of "justice" in the Euel Lee case.

Over the next two years, the frustrations of the residents of the Lower Shore continued to grow over the case of Euel Lee. Locals were determined to not let anything (specifically, the work of Bernard Ades, Lee's lawyer, who had moved the case to Baltimore to avoid a lynching) interfere with "justice" again. In late September 1933, John Richardson, a white farmer in Somerset County, and one of his employees, George Armwood, conspired to rob Mary Denston, an 82 year old white woman who was known to carry large sums of money on her person. On the morning of October 16, Armwood attacked Mary Denston as she was walking near her home. However, rather than stealing her money, Armwood only succeeded in nearly tearing off Denston's dress before he fled into the woods. Rumors of the attack flew through the area with wild and fraudulent details asserting that Armwood had chewed off both of Denston's breasts. Armwood was captured by the police near the Virginia line and signed a confession of his crime. The police first took him to the jail in Salisbury, but a large crowd began to form outside the jail. To ensure Armwood's safety from a potential lynch mob, Captain Edwin Johnson, the head of the Maryland State Police, took him to Baltimore without the knowledge of the Somerset authorities. The authorities in Somerset County quickly ordered that Armwood be brought back to the Eastern Shore to get his trial underway the following Monday. Governor Albert Ritchie was hesitant to return Armwood to Somerset County, but Somerset County Judge Robert F. Duer and State Attorney John Robins assured Ritchie that Armwood would be safe. Yet Armwood never stood trial for his crime. On the night of October 18, a crowd used a telephone pole to break down the door to the Princess Anne jail and dragged Armwood from his cell. The crowd dragged him throughout the town and hung him from a tree. After mutilating his body, the crowd hung him a second time and set his body on fire. The lynchers left his scorched corpse lying in Hayman's Lumberyard until authorities recovered it the next day, allowing scores of people to walk by and witness what happened to him.

As was the case with the lynching in Salisbury two years earlier, the residents of Somerset County laid the blame on those from "out of town" and not on themselves. Ritchie blamed Armwood's death on Duer and Robins for their broken promise to keep him safe. There are reports that cries of "Here's what we do on the Eastern Shore" and "We ain't gonna have no Euel Lee in Somerset County" were heard from the crowd of nearly 1,000 people on the night of October 18. A probe into the members of the lynch mob followed, and the Maryland State Police identified nine men. Ritchie and Attorney General Preston Lane ordered the National Guard to come to the Eastern Shore and arrest the accused men. In the early hours of November 28, 1933 the National Guard arrested four of the suspects and went to Salisbury to arrest the remaining suspects. In Salisbury, a large crowd, outraged that Ritchie had "invaded" the Eastern Shore, confronted the National Guard, overturning the car belonging to Lane and pushing the news truck of Paramount News reporter Harry Tugander into the Wicomico River. The National Guard released tear gas to try and disperse the crowd; the fire department responded by spraying water on the tear gas canisters. The next day, before a crowd of more than 1,000 cheering onlookers in Somerset County, the jury, in a *habeas corpus* hearing, set free the four men who had been arrested.



Paramount News reporter Harry Tungander's truck being hoisted from the Wicomico River (Courtesy of www.newsphotog.com)

The lynching of George Armwood was the last lynching to occur in Maryland. As was the case with thousands of other lynchings that occurred in the United States, no one was ever brought to justice for Armwood's death. He died "at the hands of persons unknown."

Euel Lee was legally executed for the murder of the Davis family on October 27, 1933. The people of the Eastern Shore had finally received the "justice" they sought.

Julie Messick, a member of Nabb's Board of Directors and a former student archival assistant at the Nabb Center, is currently pursuing a Masters of Library Science degree.

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Exhibits and Events - Fall 2013

"Getting Started"
Family History Workshop with Dr. G. Ray Thompson
Nabb Reading Room,
Saturday, October 19, 9:30 a.m.-noon
$20 fee; $15 members
Learn the basics of conducting family history research and mining local sources. You will receive materials to use in your research. Space is limited. Call 410-543-6312 for reservation.

"Making the Connections"
Family History Month Lecture and Workshop
with Vaughn Baker and M.K. Miles
Nabb Gallery, Saturday, October 19, 1-4 p.m.
Investigating alliances and networking among families opens new doors to discovering the earliest Chesapeake settlers and their interconnectedness. Miles, creator of the online genealogy database *Miles Files*, helps us find ancestors and understand the interrelationships among the families. Baker discusses the family connections of the Eastern Shore's earliest European traders and settlers. Space is limited. Call 410-543-6312 for reservation.

"The Great Gamble of the 19th Century:
How We Won the Smithsonian"
A talk by Eleanor Mulligan
Nabb Gallery, Thursday, October 24, 2 p.m.
America's iconic heritage is kept in the Smithsonian Institution, affectionately known as the "Nation's Attic." Listen to the saga of the gentle man who bestowed this gift upon us, and how he came to do such a thing. It was indeed a great gamble – and we won it – to our everlasting benefit.

"Hidden in Plain Sight: a Brief Historical Portrait of the Indian Nations of the Eastern Shore"
American Indian Heritage Month Lecture
with Dr. Céline Carayon
Nabb Gallery, Thursday, November 14, 7 p.m.
Native Americans have inhabited the Delmarva Peninsula for as many as 10,000 years and are still here today, yet their presence is often invisible. Dr. Carayon will offer an overview of the complex history of American Indian nations of the Eastern Shore in the larger contexts of Pre-Columbian cultures, the colonization of North America by Europeans, and U.S. government policies. She explores how these historical developments not only shaped American Indian fates, but also determined what we know – and more importantly what we don't know – about the Pocomoke, Assateague, Nanticoke and Choptank peoples whose names still define our landscapes.

"Native Americans: First Contact on Lower Delmarva"
September 3 – November 26
Nabb Gallery, Mon, Wed., Fri., 1-4 p.m.
The history of Native Americans of Lower Delmarva is rich and dynamic, occupying thousands of years. In the 17th century, European explorers and settlers began to irrevocably transform that lifestyle.

See how American Indians lived and worked at the time of first contact with Europeans, and the beginnings of a drastically changed way of American Indian life. Loss of freedom, alteration of their physical environment, their continually shrinking territory and the establishment of reservations mark the 17th century and depict the American Indian tragedy, while at the same time chronicling the triumph of European occupation and domination of the Delmarva Peninsula.